

## **Joint Committee on Corrections**

### **Information for Legislative Institutional Visits**

Facility Name: <i>Women's Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center</i>				
Custody Level	<i>C-1 to C-5 Female</i>		Warden	<i>Angela Mesmer</i>
Total Acreage	<i>117</i>		Address	<i>1101 East Hwy 54</i>
Acreage w/in Perimeter	<i>47</i>			<i>Vandalia, MO 63382</i>
Square Footage	<i>420,231</i>		Telephone:	<i>(573) 594-6686</i>
Year Opened	<i>1997</i>		Fax:	<i>(573) 594-6789</i>
Operational Capacity/Count (as of December 1, 2014)	<i>1,560/1,807</i>			
General Population Beds (capacity and count as of December 1, 2014)	<i>1,532/1,297</i>		Deputy Warden	<i>Tom Dunn Offender Management</i>
Segregation Beds (capacity and count as of December 1, 2014)	<i>48/25</i>		Deputy Warden	<i>Todd Francis Operations</i>
Treatment Beds (capacity and count as of December 1, 2014)	<i>300/227</i>		Asst. Warden	<i>Deborah Miller</i>
Work Cadre Beds (capacity and count as of December 1, 2014)	<i>54/38</i>		Asst. Warden	<i>N/A</i>
Diagnostic Beds (capacity and count as of December 1, 2014)	<i>200/220</i>		Major	<i>John Gibbs</i>
Protective Custody Beds (capacity and count as of December 1, 2014)	<i>N/A</i>			

#### **1. Capital Improvement Needs:**

- a. How would you rate the overall condition of the physical plant of the institution?  
*I would rate the condition of the facility as good. The structures themselves seem to be aging well. The electronic systems of the facility, such as the perimeter fence security system, the lighting system and the building automated system, are to their limits. Parts, software and components are becoming harder to find or are obsolete.*
- b. What capital improvement projects do you foresee at this facility over the next six years?
  - *Replacement of the Del Norte perimeter security system*
  - *Replacement of Microlite system*
  - *Replacement of Building Automated system*
  - *Replacement of steam and hot water boilers*
  - *Replacement of chillers and cooling tower*
  - *Replacement of refrigerant units in food service*
  - *Resurface of parking lots and perimeter road*
  - *Clean and paint water tower*

- c. How critical do you believe those projects are to the long-term sustainability of this facility?  
*I would grade these projects as very critical. Without replacement of electronic systems, we are moving closer to a major system breakdown. We are using systems that are no longer supported and the components are no longer available. Replacement of power plant equipment and refrigeration units would make the facility more efficient and comply with energy-saving mandates. The parking lots and water tower projects are vital to retain them as usable and structurally sound.*

## **2. Staffing:**

- a. Do you have any critical staff shortages?  
*No, due to departmental recruitment efforts, we have not had any staff shortages thus far, however, custody hiring pool levels are very low and hiring for 2015 Custody Staff may be impacted.*
- b. What is your average vacancy rate for all staff and for custody staff only?  
*We average 9 openings per month with 7 of those being custody positions.*
- c. Does staff accrual or usage of comp-time by staff effect your management of the institution?  
*Yes, it is difficult to keep the facility fully staffed and keep comp-time to a minimum. In addition to staff shortages, we accumulate overtime due to absenteeism, transporting offenders on out count appointments, hospital supervision and training. A weekly report is submitted by each shift that reports the number of overtime hours earned and the justifications for those hours. Whenever possible, staff members who earn overtime are given an equivalent amount of time off before the end of the week to eliminate overtime accumulation.*
- d. What is the process for assigning overtime to staff?  
*When overtime is required to staff positions, volunteers are asked for first. Volunteers sign up to work overtime in advance on signup sheets located in the airlock, in front of the Control Center. If a post cannot be filled through request for volunteers, overtime is mandated utilizing seniority list broken down by shift and rank (CO I's, CO II's) with the lowest seniority to the highest. When a staff member works overtime, they are moved from the top of the list to the bottom (staff has to work at least two or more hours in order to qualify and be moved to the bottom of the list). Staff may volunteer at any time to work overtime to move their name down on the list. The seniority list is posted on the staff bulletin board next to radio and key issue, which is accessible to staff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The list is updated daily by the shift timekeepers.*
- e. Approximately what percentage of the comp-time accrued at this institution does staff utilize as time off and what percentage is paid-off?  
*Approximately 74% of comp time accrued is paid off; 26% is used.*
- f. Is staff able to utilize accrued comp-time when they choose?  
*Yes, when staffing permits.*

## **3. Education Services:**

- a. How many (and %) of inmate students at this institution are currently enrolled in school?  
*There are 366 (23%) of inmate students currently enrolled in school at WERDCC.*
- b. How many (and %) of inmate students earn their HSE each year in this institution?  
*There are 110 (31%) of inmate students that earn their HSE each year at WERDCC.*
- c. What are some of the problems faced by offenders who enroll in education programs?
- d. What are some of the problems faced by offenders who enroll in education programs?  
*One problem faced by offenders who enroll in education programs is attempting to coordinate school with the other classes and programs that the offenders either participate in*

*voluntarily or are mandated to participate. The offender's self-esteem is an issue. If they believe they are capable, they will progress. Many of the offenders simply do not want or care about their education.*

**4. Substance Abuse Services:**

- a. What substance abuse treatment or education programs does this institution have?  
*Substance Abuse treatment is contracted and provided by Gateway Foundation. The program is a Therapeutic Community based model; clients receive group counseling, individual counseling, education groups and peer groups.*
- b. How many beds are allocated to those programs?  
*A total of 240 beds are allocated to the Treatment Program: 90 Long Term (includes year long and 6 month offenders) and 150 Short Term (ITC, CODS, 120 Treatment, PV84).*
- c. How many offenders do those programs serve each year?  
*In FY14, approximately 727 clients were served.*
- d. What percent of offenders successfully complete those programs?  
*In FY14, 93.12% were successfully discharged from the program.*
- e. What, in your opinion, is the biggest challenge to running a treatment program in a prison setting?  
*The primary challenge in running a treatment program in a prison setting is working around the institution's schedule: canteen, count, med-line, and various other activities which interfere with the daily schedule. Department of Corrections and Gateway staff work together to minimize interruptions as much as possible to provide a continuation of services. Another challenge in the institution is physical space. We offer many valuable treatment services, which are often conducted simultaneously, making it a challenge to find space for the necessary programs.*

**5. Vocational Programs:**

- a. What types of vocational education programs are offered at this institution?  
*Women's Eastern Reception, Diagnostic and Correctional Center offers the following vocational education programs: Business Technology, Professional Gardening, Certified Nurse's Assistant, Cosmetology and Building Trades.*
- b. How many offenders (and %) participate in these programs each year?  
*During FY14, this department saw 207 students (unduplicated). 131 of them completed their classes. We still had 59 of the 207 as students at the end of FY14.*
- c. Do the programs lead to the award of a certificate?  
*All of the programs receive Department of Labor Certificates. Offenders can earn a Certiport Certificate upon completion of the Business Technology class, if they receive a reasonable score on their Certiport test. Cosmetology students may be allowed to take their state board examination so that they may be licensed cosmetologists when they are released. And, the Building Trades students receive NCCER certification if they complete the class successfully. We are seeking other certification for the remaining two classes.*
- d. Do you offer any training related to computer skills?  
*Yes, the Business Technology class offers computer skills during the entire class.*

**6. Missouri Vocational Enterprises:**

- a. What products are manufactured at this institution?  
*Lab coats, hospital scrubs (tops and bottoms), visiting room jackets, broadcloth pajamas (men's and women's), mu-mu gowns, hospital gowns, seersucker robes with snaps, fleece robes with ties, T-shirts (with or without pockets, short and long sleeve or sleeveless), jersey or twill shorts, jersey lounge pants, fleece jackets, fleece pants, sweatshirts, sweatpants,*

*thermal tops, thermal pants, twill work pants, inmate work shirts and pants, sport shirts, work shirts, dress shirts, maintenance and food service shirts, kitchen towels, terry bath towels, washcloths, bed sheets (flat and fitted), pillowcases, fleece blankets, thermal blankets, suicide vest, garment hangers, canteen bags with pocket, mesh hygiene bags, screen printing and boxer briefs.*

- b. How many (and %) of offenders work for MVE at this site?

*We have a budget that allows 150 offenders to be employed for MVE, which would be 8.34% of the population; however, we currently have 144 offenders employed for MVE, which would be 8% of the population.*

- c. Who are the customers for those products?

*The customers are City, State or Government organizations including offender canteen, any tax exempt entity, such as hospitals, churches and schools, and state employees.*

- d. What skills are the offenders gaining to help them when released back to the community?

*We teach all sewing skills required in the manufacture of clothing and related products. We teach how to lie out and cut patterns with the most efficient use of material. We also teach safe operating skills, preventative maintenance including needle changes, and minor repair of machines. In addition, their exposure to this workplace will afford a smooth transition in the community workplace. Offenders learn accepted practices that will allow them to interact more easily when employed in the community. Offenders are awarded certificates as they meet the 2,000-hour requirements and are recognized by the Department of Labor when they accumulate 4,000 – 6,000 hours.*

## **7. Medical Health Services:**

- a. Is the facility accredited by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care?

*Yes, the facility is accredited by the NCCHC.*

- b. How many offenders are seen in chronic care clinics?

*Approximately 1,450 offenders are enrolled in the chronic care clinics.*

- c. What are some examples of common medical conditions seen in the medical unit?

*Some of the common medical conditions seen in the medical unit include colds, allergies, headaches, backaches, menstrual cramping, constipation and urination problems.*

- d. What are you doing to provide health education to offenders?

*Informational pamphlets are located in the hallway and in the lobby for access by offenders. Additionally, an annual health fair is hosted for offenders.*

- e. Have you had any cases of active Tuberculosis in this facility in the past year? If so, how did you respond?

*No, we did not have any cases of active Tuberculosis in the past year.*

- f. Is the aging of the population effecting health care in prisons as it is effecting health care everywhere else? If yes, please explain.

*The aging population is affecting the health care in our prison system. We also notice the use of drugs is significantly affecting this, combined with the age. Dental services are seeing the majority of their patients with complications due to the usage of methamphetamine, which is increasing the pain and also the number of patients that need to be seen. The offender population so many times has not had any prior medical care that was continuous or interrupted. We are also seeing patients that have been diagnosed with a medical condition but did not follow through upon discharge and returns to the institution still needing services for the original diagnosis.*

**8. Mental Health Services:**

- a. How do offenders go about obtaining mental health treatment services?

*Offenders access mental health services via several avenues. They may send a Health Services Request (HSR) directly to Mental Health. They may also speak with custody or classification staff about their needs. Corrections staff may send a referral to mental health on behalf of offenders. At times, staff members call directly to the Mental Health Chief to request services; particularly if it is of an urgent nature.*

- b. How many successful suicides (and %) occurred here in the past year and what is being done to prevent suicides?

*There have been no successful suicides at WERDCC during the past year. Corrections staff are trained in suicide prevention. Behaviors and/or verbalizations that may indicate suicidal ideation are taken very seriously. Suicide Watch protocol is followed for every reported incident of suicidal thought or behavior.*

- c. Approximately how many (and %) of the offenders in this institution are taking psychotropic medications?

*On average, about one third (33%) of the offenders at WERDCC are prescribed psychotropic medications. Currently 574 offenders are prescribed psychotropic medication.*

- d. How many offenders in this facility are chronically or seriously mentally ill and what is being done for them?

*Approximately one third of the offenders at WERDCC are diagnosed with a chronic or serious mental illness. A fully staffed mental health department including psychiatrists, nurse practitioner, mental health nurse, activity therapist, and licensed qualified mental health practitioners, provides daily and on-call/emergency mental health services to the offenders. Of special interest is the Women's Social Rehabilitation Unit (WSRU). Offenders who struggle to maintain in general population are admitted into the WSRU. The goal of the WSRU is to help offenders build resiliency and critical life skills which will enhance their abilities to function in general population as well as in society.*

9. What is your greatest challenge in managing this institution?

*The challenges of managing compensatory time, hiring and retaining quality employees and maintaining good staff morale for employees who do not receive adequate pay.*

10. What is your greatest asset to assist you in managing this institution?

*Just as managing staff is one of the greatest challenges, they are also, without a doubt the most valuable asset. The teamwork exhibited by staff and Executive support are invaluable.*

11. What is the condition of the facilities' vehicle fleet? (mileage, old vehicles etc?)

*Four Crown Victorias have 160,000 miles (2007)*

*Two Uplanders have 154,000 miles with excessive interior wear (2008)*

*One 15-passenger van has 62,000 miles (2012)*

*One handicap van has 55,000 miles (2007)*

*Two used Crown Victorias have 91,000 miles (2010)*

*One pool vehicle Chevrolet Impala has 97,000 miles (2008)*

*We have 2 vehicle patrol cars with 187,000 (2006) and 176,000 (2007) miles.*

*We have 4 maintenance trucks with mileage below 43,000 miles and range in model years 1994 to 1998.*

*One 12-passenger Chevrolet Express van with 106,000 miles (2008)*

*Two 15-passenger 2014 Ford F-350 vans with 20,000 miles*

*The four 2007 Crown Victorias and the two 2008 Chevrolet Uplanders have reached the mileage range for being removed and replaced from offender transport duties.*

*Two vehicle patrol cars will need replacement within the next 6 months due to the fact they average 3,000 miles each month.*

*If the 2007 Crown Victorias assigned to offender transportation are replaced, two of these vehicles could be transferred to vehicle patrol.*

*One 1997 Ford F-250 maintenance truck needs to be replaced due to frame and body deterioration.*

*This has been caused by the vehicle being used for snow and ice removal. It has had a snow plow and a full size salt spreader mounted in the bed for 17 years during the winter months.*

12. Assess the morale of your custody staff; high, medium, or low and please provide detailed explanation. **(Please have the Major answer)**

*Corrections is a dynamic career field and correctional custody officers and supervisors will readily carry out the directives necessary to implement the changes required in our dynamic work environment. However, some of these same staff persons are often notoriously slow to truly embrace certain types of changes. For some, this initial lack of support for the change can lead to temporary periods of resentment and to a corresponding, short-term dip in morale. For example, a recent change which has negatively impacted morale here is the matter of the agency offender pat-search standard; specifically, that male custody officers are no longer permitted to conduct routine pat searches of female offenders; however, I believe that as custody staff slowly accept this standard as the new norm, its corresponding impact on morale will fade.*

*A chronic issue which affects morale is the need to assign officers mandatory overtime. Overcrowding in the diagnostic unit here and the need to staff a juvenile unit have contributed to abnormally high overtime recently and we cannot know when these circumstances will change. Presumably, as the need for mandatory overtime is reduced we will also experience a corresponding increase in positive morale.*

*Certainly, there are many, many custody officers and supervisors here who consistently display the attributes typically associated with "high" morale – they maintain a positive attitude; they are confident of their abilities; they conduct themselves according to established standards as pertains to offender-management and other expectations; they feel sufficiently empowered to carry out the duties associated with their position and routinely perform at a level above the minimum expected; and they rarely miss work.*

*It is my personal belief that our administration has a genuine interest in identifying and addressing matters pertaining to morale. All administrative-team members have an open-door policy; we routinely use data collected from exit interviews and other sources to identify and address action items related to morale matters; we have recently formed a focus group to identify and address correctional officer concerns; we have stopped the shift rotation for our captains so as to introduce more stability and accountability on the individual shifts; and we have continually stressed the need for custody supervisors to uphold standards pertaining to professional interaction with their subordinate employees.*

*I firmly believe that the overall facility culture here can best be described as **positive**. I also believe that despite an active and changing environment which routinely results in the need for our custody staff to grapple with difficult challenges from year to year, on the whole, morale here is good, and often, very good.*

13. **Case Managers:**

A. How many case managers are assigned to this institution?

*We have 33 case managers and 2 classification assistants assigned to WERDCC.*

- B. Do you currently have any case manager vacancies?  
*No, we do not.*
- C. Do the case managers accumulate comp-time?  
*No, they do not.*
- D. Do the case managers at this institution work alternative schedules?  
*Yes, many case managers now work four, ten-hour days instead of five, eight-hour days.*
- E. How do inmates gain access to meet with case managers?  
*Offenders may gain access to meet with case managers through daily open door hours, wing walks, general appointments, offender correspondence, teaming violations, Transitional Accountability Plan meetings, counseling and making referrals to Mental Health and Medical.*
- F. Average caseload size per case manager?  
*On average, the caseload is 36 per case manager.*
- # of disciplinary hearings per month?  
*On average, we have 224 disciplinary hearings per month.*
  - # of IRR's and grievances per month?  
*On average, we have 32 IRRs and 11 grievances per month.*
  - # of transfers written per month?  
*On average, we have 32 transfers per month.*
  - # of re-classification analysis (RCA's) per month?  
*On average, we have 233 transfers per month.*
- G. Are there any services that you believe case managers should be providing, but are not providing?  
*Our staff members are providing all necessary services at this time. Currently, classification staff members conduct programs on Impact of Crime on Victims, Pathway to Change and Anger Management. Other duties assigned to classification staff, but not limited to, are custody support, investigations, and counseling.*
- H. If so, what are the barriers that prevent case managers from delivering these services?  
*Not applicable.*
- I. What type of inmate programs/classes are the case managers at this institution involved in?  
*Impact of Crime on Victims Classes, Restorative Justice, Pre-Release, Canine Helpers Allow More Possibilities (CHAMPS), Women's Social Rehabilitation Unit, Peer Action Care Team, Project Reach, Hospice, Beauty for Ashes, Pathway to Change, Anger Management, Money Management, Making Peace with your Past, Pre-Release and Celebrate Recovery.*
- J. What other duties are assigned to case managers at this institution?  
*Job coordinator, processing visiting applications, key management, counseling offenders, criminal histories, offender payroll, death notices, Transition Accountability Plans, work release applications, investigations, organize room moves, file audits, notary service, bed assignments, vendor orders, court returns processed, facilitate outside phone calls with Department of Family Services and attorneys, GRA's, and PREA screeners, supply requests, mental health referrals, medical referrals, chaplain referrals, escorting visitors for programs/classes, 4-H Life Program, Adult Internal Risk Assessment, Library Relief, Restorative Justice Gardens and other duties as assigned.*

#### **14. Institutional Probation and Parole officers:**

- A. How many parole officers are assigned to this institution?  
*We have 11 Institutional Parole Officers, 1 Unit Supervisor, 1 District Administrator, 3 Office Support Assistants (Keyboarding) and 1 Senior Office Support Assistant.*
- B. Do you currently have any staff shortages?  
*Yes, we have two vacant positions for Institutional Parole Officer.*

C. Do the parole officers accumulate comp-time?

*No. At the current time, staff is allowed to utilize compensatory time as they acquire it by flexing hours.*

D. Do the parole officers at this institution flex their time, work alternative schedules?

*Yes, they are encouraged to flex their time in order to not accumulate excessive compensatory time.*

E. How do inmates gain access to meet with parole officers?

*Offenders submit correspondence to the Institutional Parole Officer in their housing unit and, as time permits, the Institutional Parole Officers have open door meetings. The general population units try to have two open door sessions per week. Also, the Institutional Parole Officers schedule appointments and call the offenders out to interview them for necessary reports prior to due dates. This is done automatically on the part of the parole officer. During the R&O orientation, two parole officers alternate talking to the offenders during an open forum-type setting and go over probation and parole rules. A packet of information is handed out to each offender during receiving that covers probation and parole issues and who to contact with questions.*

F. Average caseload size per parole officer?

*For the general population parole officers, their caseload is the entire housing unit, averaging around 256 offenders. The specialized caseloads, treatment and violator units are less, but still average around 175 to 200 offenders.*

- # of pre-parole hearing reports per month?

*There are approximately 87 pre-parole hearing reports per month.*

- # of community placement reports per month?

*There are approximately 18 community placement reports per month.*

- # of investigation requests per month?

*There are approximately 118 investigation requests per month.*

G. Are there any services that you believe parole officers should be providing, but are not providing?

*The parole officers at WERDCC are not participating that much in programs or classes at the present time. Our main focus is on providing a high volume of reports to the Courts and Board, which mainly consumes our time. It would be nice if we could be more involved in Pathway to Change and pre-release programs.*

H. If so, what are the barriers that prevent officers from delivering these services?

*At the present time, our adjusted average work unit per officer is 210 when the average should be 173 work hours per officer. We have a high volume of reports that are due to the Courts and Board with time sensitive due dates.*

I. What type of inmate programs/classes are the parole officers at this institution involved in?

*At this time, the parole officers are not involved in inmate programs/classes.*

15. Please list any other issues you wish to discuss or bring to the attention of the members of the Joint Committee on Corrections.

*Not applicable.*

16. Does your institution have saturation housing? If so, how many beds?

*Yes, approximately 100 beds.*

17. **Radio/Battery Needs:**

- a. What is the number of radios in working condition?

*At WERDCC, 283 radios are in working condition.*



- b. Do you have an adequate supply of batteries with a good life expectancy?  
*Yes, we have an adequate supply of batteries with a good life expectancy.*
- c. Are the conditioners/rechargers in good working order?  
*Yes, the conditioners/rechargers are in good working order.*